

Senate Bill 426, establishing an Oregon Educators Benefit Board, came rolling out of the full Ways and Means Committee this morning like a stink bug riding a fast moving train. Neither the subcommittee nor the full committee would consider any amendments that might have made this bill more palatable for community colleges. Here's the vote count from the committee.

Sen. Kurt Schrader, Co-Chair YES

Rep. Mary Nolan, Co-Chair YES

Sen. Margaret Carter, Vice-Chair YES

Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Vice-Chair YES

Sen. Alan C Bates YES

Sen. Richard Devlin YES

Sen. Avel Gordly NO

Sen. Betsy Johnson YES

Sen. Frank Morse NO

Sen. David Nelson NO

Sen. Joanne Verger YES

Sen. Ben Westlund YES

Sen. Doug Whitsett NO

Sen. Jackie Winters ABSENT

Rep. David Edwards YES

Rep. Larry Galizio YES

Rep. Bill Garrard NO

Rep. Bruce L Hanna NO

Rep. Bob Jenson YES-may change his vote on the floor

Rep. Susan Morgan NO

Rep. Chip Shields YES

Proponents have responded that our concerns can be managed through administrative rule-making but there are so many unanswered questions about the effects of the proposal that OCCA is urging a full court press to try to kill the bill on the floor when it emerges next week. This is such a politically-loaded effort that there may be no stopping what has turned out to be a high priority for the Democratic majority this session. Please continue your calls and contacts to your area legislators to get the bill sent back for a more rigorous study.

In other hearings this week, the Governor was first among a long list of proponents to support the Shared Responsibility Model for student financial aid. OCCA supports this bill and is encouraged by the committee response to the conferees. There were also hearings on this bill in Portland on Wednesday and today in Ashland.

The hearings on House Bill 2593 and Senate Bill 342 allowing retired nursing instructors to return to work without altering their PERS compensation opened in the House Health Policy Subcommittee and Senate Commerce committees respectively. The committees

understood the importance of supporting this concept given the difficulty in securing sufficient nurse educators.

The Oregon Student Association held a very successful rally on the steps of the Capitol on Thursday. Chemeketa President Gretchen Schuette addressed the crowd about the commitment of community colleges to broader student access. A photo from that rally is attached. Thanks, Gretchen for a rousing presentation!

Bills to be considered by the OCCA Legislative Committee on Monday will include:

1. SB 652 (Expanded Options Amendments)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0600.dir/sb0652.intro.pdf>

2. HB 2724 (PERS Exemption - Retired Staff Other Than Faculty/Management)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2700.dir/hb2724.intro.pdf>

3. HB 2769 (CC Distribution Formula Change)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2700.dir/hb2769.intro.pdf>

4. HB 2752 (Jobs Plus)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2700.dir/hb2752.intro.pdf>

5. SB 638 (Reserve Fund)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2700.dir/hb2724.intro.pdf>

6. SJR 22 (Annual Sessions)
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sjr1.dir/sjr0022.intro.pdf>

Next week we are looking forward to the following hearings:

- A. HB 2246 (Jobs Plus), House Workforce and Economic Development, Public Hearing and Work Session, February 26, 8am, HR C

- B. HB 2476 (Public Contracts - Verification of License), House Business and Labor, Public Hearing, February 26, HR D